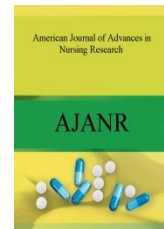




AMERICAN JOURNAL OF ADVANCES IN NURSING RESEARCH

Journal homepage: www.mcmed.us/journal/ajanr



ATTITUDE OF ADULT TOWARDS MENTALLY ILL

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Article Info

Received 15/10/2018

Revised 16/11/2018

Accepted 05/01/2019

Key word: Attitude,
adult, mental illness.

ABSTRACT

Mental health is an integral and essential component of health. Mental illness is a state of imbalance between the individual and the surrounding world, a state of disharmony between oneself and others, a co-existence between the realities of the self. Mental illnesses are some least understood condition in society. Mental illness is an adjustment in living others attitude strongly influence the mentally ill person. So a positive attitude provides a support to them. Objectives: To assess the attitude of the adult towards mentally ill, To determine the association of attitude with socio-demographic characteristics of adults. Method: A descriptive research design was used for the present study. The sample consists of 100 adults. The attitude scale is used to assess the attitude of adults towards mentally ill. Data were analysed by using descriptive statistics, inferential statistics. Results: The findings of the study showed that out of 100 adults, 68% of the subject had favourable attitude, 31% had moderate attitude and 1% had unfavourable attitude. There is a significant association of attitude with education and occupation.

INTRODUCTION

A healthy mind is essential for a human being to pursue his goals and ambitions in life rather than other factors. If a person has a healthy balance of emotions he can think and act accordingly. So mental health is considered as an important component of mankind. Due to several organic factors and emotional stressors, this healthy balance of mind gets disrupted leading to mental illness. Mental illness can cause devastating effects on individual, family and society. For a person experiencing it, being diagnosed with mental illness is a frightening and confusing period. It can also be a difficult period for that person, families' relatives and friends. People with mental

illness may also experience anger and bitterness due to the manner in which mental illness is affecting all aspects of their life. They may be hypersensitive to criticism and feel as if others, including their career and mental health professional, do not understand them or care what they are going through. They feel rejected by friends and relatives and consequently isolate themselves. They may experience an overwhelming sense of despair, lack of interest, lack of energy or motivation [1]. More than 450 million people suffer from a type of mental disorder [2]. Mental disorders account for 13-14% of the world's total burden of ill health [3]. India is estimated to have 10-20 persons out of 1,000 suffer from severe mental illness and three to five times more have an emotional disorder [4]. A report of National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), in 2008 showed that in India 70 million people suffer from mental ailments and 50-90

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Research Article



percent of them are not able to access corrective service due to less awareness and negative attitude or stigma towards mental illness [5]. Many people with serious mental illness are challenged double. On one hand, they struggle with the symptoms and disabilities that result from the disease. On the other, they are challenged by the stereotypes and prejudice that result from a misconception about mental illness. As a result of both people with mental illness are robbed of the opportunities that define a quality of life, good job, safe housing, satisfactory health care and affiliation with a diverse group of people [6]. Investigators also experienced that adults hold a negative and stigmatising attitude towards mental illness during their clinical and community posting. Therefore this study was conducted to appraise the attitude of adults towards mental illness among the general population. The result that would be gained from these studies would provide essential and useful information for the health care providers to give awareness and to provide health services to the community.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The setting of the study: The study was conducted at Samaritan Hospital, Pazhanganad. This is a 250 bedded multispecialty hospital, about 400-450 patients visit different OPDs every day.

Sample: The sample chosen for this study were 100 OPD patients in a selected Hospital at Ernakulum district.

Sample size: The sample size is the number of subjects, events, behaviour, or situations that are examined in a study [7]. The sample size of this study is 100 OPD patients of Samaritan Hospital.

Sampling technique: Sampling is the process of selecting a representative part of the population. Thus a carefully carried out sampling process helps to draw a sample that represents the characteristics of the population from which the sample is drawn.⁷The sampling technique used in this study was convenience sampling.

Selection /development of tool: The study was planned to assess the attitude towards mentally ill among the general population. For this researcher developed a tool consisting of two-section, demographic variables and attitude scale.

Description of the tool

Section A: This section consists of demographic variables such as age, gender, religion, education, marital status, economic status, occupation, familiarity with the mentally ill person and to whom they are familiar.

Section B: Attitude scale is a rating scale consisting of 20 items in different areas.

Data collection: Before the actual collection of data, formal permission was obtained from concerned authority. A brief introduction was given about the purposes of the study. Informed consent was taken from the subjects, the confidentiality of the information was assured and adequate explanation was given about the attitude scale. Subjects were asked to complete attitude scale according to their attitude.

RESULTS

The finding of the study showed that out of 100 adults. 68% of the subject had favourable attitude, 31% had moderate attitude and 1% had unfavourable attitude. There is a significant association of attitude with education and occupation.

IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the study have brought out certain facts that have far-reaching implications for nursing in the areas of practice, education, nursing administration and research.

NURSING SERVICE

The study has several implications on the nursing practice. The study suggests the need for strong emphasis on public education to increase mental health literacy among the general population to increase awareness and positive attitude of people towards mental illness. For example, nurses can take the lead by playing an active role in advocating change and fair treatment of people with psychiatric disorders. Direct-care nurses can advocate for patients who do not receive the full scope of treatment.

NURSING EDUCATION

The first thing each nurse can do is to examine his or her own preconceived ideas and fears about patients with a psychiatric diagnosis. Although some may believe that these individuals may be violent, others may feel that they are lazy or calling for attention. A self-conscious, educated nurse does not allow such fears and misconceptions to interfere with the nurse-patient relationship.

NURSING ADMINISTRATION

Nursing administrative supports should be provided to conduct research studies in a different population. They should plan and organize activities to improve awareness towards mentally ill among the general population and nursing professionals.

NURSING RESEARCH

More research is needed to establish best practices; nurses have an opportunity to make an impact. Nurse researchers



and advanced nurse practitioners can design, evaluate, and implement theory-based stigma reduced interventions, and be a strong voice in making a positive impact on public opinion.

The data presented in table 2 and figure 1 shows that, among 100 adults majority 68 (68%) had favorable attitude, 31(31%) had moderate attitude and only 1(1%) had unfavorable attitude.

Figure 2 shows among 100 OP patients 3(3%) are Illiterate, 24(24%) are having primary education, 41(41%) are having SSLC/+2 education 24(24%) are having UG education and 8(8%) are having PG education.

Figure 3 shows among 100 OP patients majority are unemployed 42(42%), 25(25%) are having other jobs, 12(12%) are having an office job, 11(11%) are daily wage workers, 10(10%) are students

Table 1. Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables

N=100

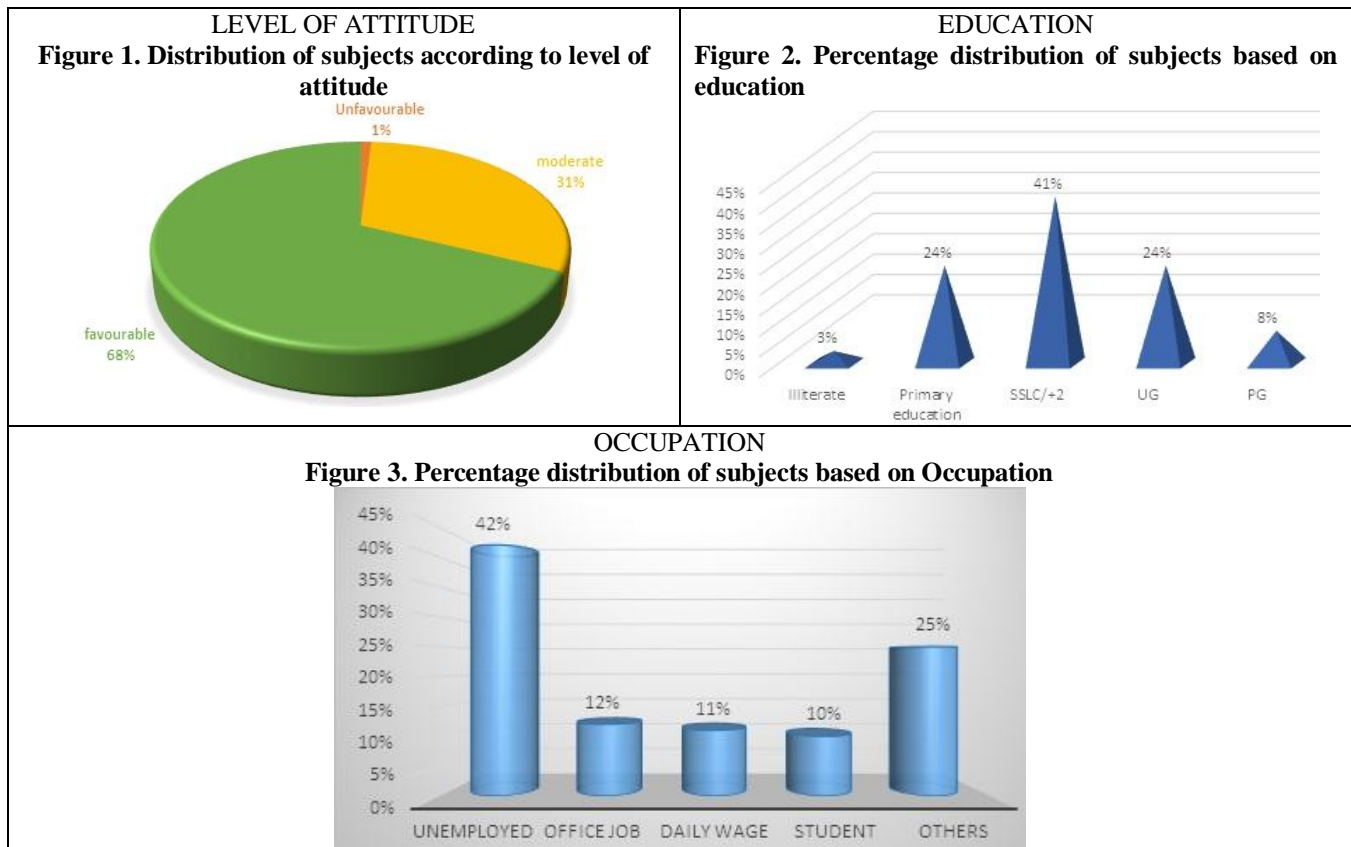
S. No	Demographic variables	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Age 18-29 yrs 30-42yrs 43-55yrs 56-65yrs	24 25 22 29	24% 25% 22% 29%
2.	Gender Male Female	34 66	34% 66%
3.	Religion Christian Hindu Muslim Others	51 26 21 2	51% 26% 21% 2%
4.	Education Illiterate Primary education SSLC/+2 UG PG	3 24 41 24 8	3% 24% 41% 24% 8%
5.	Marital status Married Unmarried Widow Divorced	73 20 7 0	73% 20% 7% 0%
6.	Economic status <10,000 10,001-20,000 20,001-30,000 >30,000	58 21 9 12	58% 21% 9% 12%
7.	Occupation Unemployed Office job Daily wage Student Others	42 12 11 10 25	42% 12% 11% 10% 25%
8.	Familiarity with the mentally ill person Yes No	31 69	31% 69%



8.1.	To whom they are familiar?		
	Family member	5	16%
	Relative	4	13%
	Friend	5	16%
	Others	17	55%

Table 2. Distribution of subject based on the level of attitude

Level of attitude	Range of score	frequency	percentage
Unfavourable	20-50	1	1%
Moderate	51-70	31	31%
Favourable	71-100	68	68%



DISCUSSION

The findings of the study showed that out of 100 adults 68% subject had a favourable attitude, 31% have a moderate attitude, and 1% has an unfavourable attitude. The study result was supported by a study conducted in Latin America to assess the community perception to mental disorders among 172 participants the result shows that the attitude in relation to the mentally ill is predominantly positive, especially among individual with higher educational or socio-economic level.

CONCLUSION

The study to assess the attitude towards mentally ill among adults by using an attitude scale reveals reveal that 68% adults were having favorable attitude, 31% had moderate attitude and 1% had unfavorable attitude.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We offer our gratitude and thanks to the management of our educational institution, our principal Rev. Prof.Sr.Rubeena.S.D M.Sc (N), M.Phil, special thanks to Samaritan Hospital Authority, Pazhanganad for permission for conducting the study and to the OPD patients of Samaritan Hospital, Pazhanganad.



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